

CLAIMS

What is claimed as new and desired to be protected by Letters

Patent is set forth in the appended claims:

- Sub A³ 1. A baseball batting practice method, comprising:
- selecting a spherical unit from which a segment has been removed to leave a unit comprised of an exterior spherical portion and a flat area, the removed segment being sized such that a perpendicular line from the center of the flat area to the opposite side of the remaining spherical portion is equal to or between forty-five and fifty-five percent of the original spherical unit diameter;
- gripping the unit in a manner to enable one of several standard pitches;
- initiating the throwing motion;
- moving the arm in a manner to enable the chosen standard pitch; and
- releasing the unit at a time and in a manner to enable the chosen pitch and to direct the unit to a target area in proximity to a human batter, to enable the human batter to attempt to identify standard pitches and hit the unit with a bat and thereby improve the human batter's batting

skills.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the removed segment is one-half of the original spherical unit.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the bat is a typical baseball bat.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the bat is thinner than a typical baseball bat.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the bat has a substantially constant diameter, the diameter being smaller than a typical baseball bat in the designated hitting portion of the typical baseball bat.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the standard pitches comprise a fastball, knuckleball, screwball, slider, curveball, sinkerball, splitfinger fastball, and rising fastball.

Sub A4 7. The method of claim 1, wherein the chosen standard pitch is the fastball, the unit is gripped vertically and released straight overhand.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the chosen standard pitch is the knuckleball, the unit is gripped by placing the flat area of the unit in the palm of the throwing hand and thrown and released straight overhand.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the chosen standard pitch is the

screwball, the unit is gripped vertically, thrown underhand, and released while twisting the hand to the right (for right hand throwers) or to the left (for left hand throwers).

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the chosen standard pitch is the slider, the unit is gripped vertically and thrown and released at the three-quarter side arm position.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the chosen standard pitch is the curveball, the unit is gripped vertically and thrown and released at the one-half side arm position.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the chosen standard pitch is the sinkerball, the unit is gripped with the flat area up and thrown and released at the one-half side arm position.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein the chosen standard pitch is the splitfinger fastball, the unit is gripped the flat area up and thrown and released at the three-quarter side arm position.

14. The method of claim 1, wherein the chosen standard pitch is the rising fastball, the unit is gripped with the flat area down, thrown one-half side arm, and released while slightly tilting the unit forward.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein the unit is constructed from rubber.

16. The method of claim 1, further comprising providing an instructional table describing the grips, arm movements and release methods for the various standard pitches, for pitcher enablement, and for the batter to learn to identify the standard pitches associated with arm movements, to enable the batter to improve by recognizing the arm movement while batting and anticipating the standard pitch associated with the identified arm movement.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein the instructional table includes illustrations of arm positions.

18. The method of claim 16, wherein the instructional table includes illustrations of ball gripping positions.

19. Substitute game apparatus for playing baseball, comprising a modified ball, the ball comprising a spherical unit from which a segment has been removed to leave a unit comprised of an exterior spherical portion and a flat area, the removed segment being sized such that a perpendicular line from the center of the flat area to the opposite side of the remaining spherical

portion is equal to or between forty-five and fifty-five percent of the original spherical unit diameter.

20. The apparatus of claim 19, further comprising a modified bat, the bat having a substantially constant diameter, the diameter being smaller than a typical baseball bat in the designated hitting portion of the typical baseball bat.

Sub R57

21. A method for playing baseball comprising:

substituting, for the ball, a modified ball, the modified ball comprising a spherical unit from which a segment has been removed to leave a unit comprised of an exterior spherical portion and a flat area, the removed segment being sized such that a perpendicular line from the center of the flat area to the opposite side of the remaining spherical portion is equal to or between forty-five and fifty-five percent of the original spherical unit diameter; and playing the game using the modified ball.

22. The method of claim 21, further comprising substituting, for the bat, a modified bat, the modified bat having a constant diameter and playing the game using the modified bat.

